

"THE UNITED STATES NAVY"

(Continued from page fourteen.)

The old Navy was the strong arm which inspired fear and respect in foreign antagonists. The new Navy will worthily perpetuate the reputation of the old, and while the American flag floats over a keel our country will know that its interests will be protected and its dignity maintained.

THE AMERICAN FLEET IN THE PACIFIC.

As the fleet of Admiral Evans steams up the west coast of the Americas the men behind the guns will be constantly reminded of notable deeds of daring, courage, and enterprise. Pizarro in Peru, Balboa at the Isthmus of Darien, Cortes in Mexico, and along its coast the names of his famous lieutenants will call to mind stirring deeds. At Magdalena Bay, where the big guns were fired for the first time on the Pacific, they saw the land to which the great conqueror of Mexico gave the name California, which was later made to cover the entire region between the Sierra and the sea. At San Diego they will hear of the brave and earnest Father Junipero Serra, the advance guard of Christian civilization, who founded there the first of the twenty-one missions that linked the fertile region of Alta California to Spain. Monterey will recall the Spanish count, whose expedition to that coast in 1662 gave to the bay its name. Sir Francis Drake also sailed along those shores and gave his name, too, to a bay further up the coast. And the attempt of the Russians, coming down from the north, to take possession of the rich country reaching to the snowy mountains will be recalled by the remains of the old fort built by them near the mouth of what to this day is known as Russian River.

But at Monterey there will be recalled an incident in which was shown the same spirit which has actuated our Navy from the time our first vessel of war touched the water with her keel. California was Mexican territory, though held by the Mexican Government by a precarious tenure. England had long before, as had France, cast covetous eyes upon her rich valleys, and for some years previous to 1846 the former power had kept on the Pacific coast a fleet ready to pounce upon the fair land at the first chance that would offer her an excuse to take possession. The United States also had in view the acquisition of that part of the continent which would round out our territory, and we had at the time on the Pacific coast a small squadron. June 7, 1846, Commodore John D. Sloat lay in the harbor of Mazatlan on the U.

S. S. Savannah, and at San Blas, only 82 miles farther from Monterey, lay Admiral Sir John Seymour on the British line-of-battle ship Collingwood. Both were waiting for the opening of hostilities between Mexico and the United States to sail northward and take possession of the coveted country. By special message from Mexico Commodore Sloat received news that the Mexican forces had invaded Texas, and at once hoisted anchor and on the same day was on his way to plant the American flag on California soil. The British admiral sailed on a similar errand the next day, but Sloat beat the Englishman up the coast by two weeks, arriving July 2, while Seymour did not arrive until July 16.

TAKING POSSESSION OF CALIFORNIA.

In the meanwhile Commodore Sloat had taken possession of the country in the name of the United States, and had raised our flag at Monterey July 7, 1846. When the Collingwood sailed into Monterey Bay she was anchored within a pistol shot of the Savannah, which had been joined by the Congress and sloop of war Levant and Cyane. The American vessels had their crews at quarters, and all that was needed was to run out the guns in case the British admiral designed trouble. But none came, for Seymour, though reluctant to acknowledge it, was forced to see that the American flag indeed floated over the town of Monterey, and, boarding the Savannah, grimly made his compliments to the American commodore amid scarcely concealed preparations for action.

"You seem to be about to give your men some practice in art of gunnery," he said.

"I did not know," said Sloat, pointing to the American flag waving over the town, "but that it would take some practice to keep it there."

"But tell me, Commodore," said Admiral Seymour, "What would you have done had you found the flag of some other nation floating there, and that flag guarded by a ship of the line?"

"I should," replied Commodore Sloat, "have at least fired one shot at it, and perhaps have gone to the bottom, and left my Government to settle the matter as it thought best."

This was the spirit of the old Navy, whose commodore, in his general order before taking possession of the fairest part of our territory, said:

We are about to land on the territory of Mexico, with whom the United States is at war; to strike their flag and hoist our own in place of it is our duty. It is not only our duty to take California, but to preserve it afterwards as a part of the United States at all hazards.

That is the spirit of the new Navy also, as was demonstrated by Dewey at Manila. Admiral Evans' men will find their high ideals of duty, courage, and patriotism already long established by brave deeds on the greatest ocean of the globe.

INSURANCE AGAINST WAR

It is a serious matter that, by a vote of 199 to 83, the four battleship programme recommended by the President has been rejected by the House. Nobody wants to put a cent more than is necessary into battleships. They pay no direct dividends to their owners, and the value of the indirect profit on them in the protection and preservation of peace is apt to be less appreciated than it deserves. Battleships are insurance against war. They are very dear to build, unproductive when built, and very expensive to maintain. But all insurance is costly and unproductive. It would be an enormous economy if we could do away with the need of fire-insurance or even make a material reduction in the cost of it. The loss by fire last year in this country was about \$214,000,000; the insurance loss was \$128,000,000, and doubtless the cost of insurance was considerably more than that sum. Besides this cost of insurance premiums we must reckon as part of our fire-insurance bill the cost of maintenance of all the fire-apparatus and firemen in the country. Measured up against our fire-insurance bill our war-insurance bill does not seem so big. Last year it was about \$200,000,000; about \$88,000,000 for the navy and \$102,000,000 for the army. It is, of course, a pity we have to pay so much. Whenever all the leading nations can agree to diminish the chances of war and carry less war insurance, we can and will join with them in doing so. But until there is such agreement it will be bad economy for us to save money on our war insurance. Congress is willing to vote two battleships and a couple of colliers, and to authorize naval expenditure of nearly \$108,000,000. That is by no means a niggardly provision, but in the judgment of the experts it does not quite warrant us in feeling that as against the chances of war we are "fully insured."—Harper's Weekly.

MINISTER WU A VEGETARIAN.

NEW YORK, May 6.—Wu Ting Fang, the Chinese Minister, attended a food scientists' dinner given by Eugene Christian last night, and declared in a speech that for the past two years he had abstained from all intoxicants, tea, coffee, meat, fish and fowl, and had lived on nuts, fruits and vegetables. After telling of the foods and beverages he had avoided, Minister Wu said that the two-years dieting had cured him of rheumatism, sciatica and gout, and had taken twenty years off his age.

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